

Wind turbine's worst enemy: wind.

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The owner of a wind turbine in that was knocked down by the wind last week in northern Iowa said it is awaiting word from the insurance company before deciding what to do next.

The wind turbine is believed to have fallen shortly before 7 a.m. last Friday. It's owned by the Clarion-Goldfield Community School District.

"We're going to see what (the insurance company) comes up with," Superintendent Robert Olson said. "We're just going to have to figure out where we are financially and go from there."

The turbine fell on a power line, knocking out power to about 800 customers of MidAmerican Energy Co. Part of Clarion was affected, and classes at the high school were canceled because of the outage.

The turbine, which cost \$141,000, was built in June 2002 as part of an educational school project. It's designed to help the school save money on utility costs.

The electricity generated goes to the local power grid and the school gets credits on its power bill.

"I haven't heard any instances like this before," said Allan Urlis, spokesman for MidAmerican Energy Co. "We are, of course, happy that no one got hurt."

Before the incident, the turbine allegedly lost a piece from a blade, which left it improperly balanced. Brakes that are designed to stop the turbine in such a scenario then failed and left the blades spinning.

Olson said there was no way to stop the blades until the wind stopped.

The turbine is covered by insurance, and investigators were expected on Monday.